UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT
GULF OF MEXICO REGION

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT

For Public Release

1. OCCURRED
   DATE: 31-MAY-2013 TIME: 1230 HOURS

2. OPERATOR: Arena Offshore, LP
   REPRESENTATIVE: 
   TELEPHONE: 
   CONTRACTOR: HERCULES OFFSHORE DRILLING
   REPRESENTATIVE: 
   TELEPHONE: 

3. OPERATOR/CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE/SUPERVISOR ON SITE AT TIME OF INCIDENT:

4. LEASE: G22606
   AREA: VR
   LATITUDE: 52
   BLOCK:
   LONGITUDE:

5. PLATFORM: C
   RIG NAME: HERCULES 150

6. ACTIVITY:
   EXPLORATION (POE)
   DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCTION (DOCD/POD)

7. TYPE:
   EQUIPMENT FAILURE
   HUMAN ERROR
   EXTERNAL DAMAGE
   SLIP/TRIP/FALL
   WEATHER RELATED
   LEAK
   UPSET H2O TREATING
   OVERBOARD DRILLING FLUID
   OTHER

8. CAUSE:
   X EQUIPMENT FAILURE
   X HUMAN ERROR
   EXTERNAL DAMAGE
   SLIP/TRIP/FALL
   WEATHER RELATED
   LEAK
   UPSET H2O TREATING
   OVERBOARD DRILLING FLUID
   OTHER

9. WATER DEPTH: 15 FT.

10. DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 15 MI.

11. WIND DIRECTION: SE
    SPEED: 15 M.P.H.

12. CURRENT DIRECTION: 
    SPEED: M.P.H.

13. SEA STATE: FT.
On Friday May 31, 2013, hot slag from a torch-cutting operation being performed on the Hercules 150 drilling rig fell onto non-flame resistant tarpaulins on the Vermillion 52-C production platform resulting in a fire. The tarpaulins had been placed over the platform compressor, crane and chemical pumps to protect the equipment from drilling fluids during drilling operations. The total cost of the damage done to the affected equipment by the fire is estimated to be $150,000. At the time of the incident the production platform wells were shut-in and the facility was unmanned.

At approximately 9:00 AM Friday May 31, 2013, the Hercules 150 Offshore Installations Manager (OIM), the Rig Maintenance Supervisor and the Rig Welder inspected an area on the port side aft of the rig cantilever where a section of hand railing was to be replaced. The railing was to be torch cut during the removal process. The Welder received permission to proceed with the planning and permits for the hand rail replacement. The Welder completed the required Hercules Permit To Work (PTW) and the Job Safety Analysis (JSA), and submitted the forms to the OIM. The Arena Rig Site Supervisor (Arena's designated Person-In-Charge) signed the PTW at approximately 11:45 AM. At approximately 12:30 PM the Welder began cutting the handrail, his Fire Watch was positioned six feet forward of him on a grating walkway. The hot slag fell (approximately 47 feet) from the work area onto the tarpaulins below igniting the tarpaulins. The fire was observed by the Fire Watch; who stopped the Welder and announced the fire over the rig intercom. Rig personnel responded to the fire and safely extinguished the fire within an estimated eight to ten minutes utilizing a thirty pound dry chemical extinguisher. The rig fire water system was then used to douse the smoldering tarpaulin remains and cool the effected equipment.

On June 03, 2013 BSEE inspectors performed an onsite investigation. Further investigation of the incident found the tarpaulins had been placed over the compressor, crane and chemical pumps on the platform May 08, 2013, and prior to the rig moving on location. The rig arrived on location, Vermillion 52-C production platform, on May 10, 2103. The drilling package was moved into position on June 3, 2013. Between May 9th and June 3rd the rig maintenance and repair was being performed.

After reviewing the PTW, JSA, witness statements, rig morning reports, Arena General Welding Plan, and the Arena incident investigation report the following were found.

1. The OIM, the Rig Maintenance Supervisor and the Rig Welder failed to recognize the platform, adjacent to the rig, as being part of the hot work area.
2. The Arena Rig Site Supervisor signed the PTW without visiting the work area as required by the approved Arena General Welding Plan.
3. All flammable materials and/or substances on the platform within 35 feet of the slag impact areas were not removed or rendered inert.
4. No fire watch was stationed on the platform for immediate response in the event of a fire on the platform.

18. LIST THE PROBABLE CAUSE(S) OF ACCIDENT:

Hot slag from the torch cutting operation of the rig handrail falling (approximately 47 feet) onto the non-flame resistant tarpaulins below igniting the tarpaulins.

19. LIST THE CONTRIBUTING CAUSE(S) OF ACCIDENT:

Human error by all parties involved which included the following:
1. The OIM, the Rig Maintenance Supervisor and the Rig Welder failed to recognize the platform, adjacent to the rig, as being part of the hot work area.
2. The Arena Rig Site Supervisor signed the PTW without visiting the work area as required by the approved Arena General Welding Plan.
3. All flammable materials and/or substances on the platform within 35 feet of the slag impact areas were not removed or rendered inert.

4. No fire watch was stationed on the platform for immediate response in the event of a fire on the platform.

20. LIST THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

21. PROPERTY DAMAGED:

The total cost of the damage to the affected equipment by the fire is estimated to be $150,000; $90,000 for the crane and $60,000 for the compressor and chemical pumps.

ESTIMATED AMOUNT (TOTAL): $150,000

22. RECOMMENDATIONS TO PREVENT RECURRENCE NARRATIVE:

The Lakes Charles District office has no recommendations.

23. POSSIBLE OCS VIOLATIONS RELATED TO ACCIDENT: YES

24. SPECIFY VIOLATIONS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CONTRIBUTING. NARRATIVE:

INC G-303 REG. 30 CFR 250.113(a) Flammable materials and/or substances on the Vermilion 52-C production platform were not relocated 35 feet horizontally from the impact areas of the slag from the torch cutting operation. Hot slag from the torch cutting operation of the handrail fell (approximately 47 feet) onto the tarpaulins below igniting the tarpaulins.

INC G-110 REG. 30 CFR 250.107(a)(1) The OIM, the Rig Maintenance Supervisor and the Rig Welder failed to recognize the platform, adjacent to the rig, as being part of the hot work area.

The Arena Rig site Supervisor (Arenas designated Person-In-Charge) signed the PTW without visiting the work area as required by the approved Arena General Welding Plan.

No fire watch was stationed on the platform for immediate response in the event of a fire on the platform.

25. DATE OF ONSITE INVESTIGATION:

03-JUN-2013

26. ONSITE TEAM MEMBERS:

Larry Miller / Bill olive / Mitchell Klumpp /

29. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

PANEL FORMED: NO

OCS REPORT:

30. DISTRICT SUPERVISOR:

Williamson, Larry